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A

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE

PREACHED BY

REV. WM. P. PAINE, D.D.,

ON THE

FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PASTORAL CONNECTION

WITH THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,

IN HOLDEN,

OCTOBER 24TH, 1873,

WITH OTHER ACCOMPANYING EXERCISES.

WORCESTER.
OFFICE OF THE DAILY PRESS, E. R. FISKE & CO., PRINTERS.
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Rev. Wm. P. Paine, D. D.:

Dear Sir:—The Committee of Arrangements for the Memorial services in connection with the Fortieth Anniversary of your settlement over this church have frequently been requested to publish the address given by you on that occasion.

The Committee heartily unite with others in this wish and ask your permission to thus publish it and request you to furnish a manuscript copy of the same.

ETHAN DAVIS, Chairman,
J. H. GLEASON, Secretary.

Holden, November 1st, 1873.

Mr. Ethan Davis and J. H. Gleason, Esq.:

Gentlemen:—As the discourse to which you refer is both historical and statistical, and so may be of some value for reference if put into a permanent form, I will cheerfully accede to your request, and furnish you a copy for the press.

WM. P. PAINE.

Holden, Nov. 8th, 1873.

PREFACE.

In accordance with a notice read at the close of the services on the preceding Sabbath, a meeting was holden in the Town Hall, on the evening of Oct. 2d, 1873, of those interested in making arrangements for an appropriate observance of the Fortieth Anniversary of the settlement of the Rev. Wm. P. Paine, over the Congregational Church and Society, in Holden, Mass., which occurred Oct. 24th, 1833. A committee was chosen as follows: J. H. Gleason, Wm. H. Drury and J. T. Rood of the Parish Committee, Dea. S B Hubbard and J. B. Moore of the Church Committee, and five at large viz.: Ethan Davis, Charles Flagg, Moses Winn, Wm. Moore and F. M. Stowell.

This Committee selected as Chairman Ethan Davis, and J. H. Gleason, Secretary. The time was short and much work was to be done. It was evident at the beginning that an unusual number were interested in the undertaking. The young people volunteered to trim and beautify the old Church, and the older ones not to be outdone, met daily to wash and brush until all was fresh and clean.

More than 350 Postal cards were sent to former residents of Holden who had been in some manner connected with this Parish, containing the following notice and invitation:

"*Shall Old Acquaintance be Forgot?*"

The Fortieth Anniversary of the Settlement of Rev. WILLIAM P. PAINE, over the Congregational Church and Society in Holden, Mass., occurs on

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24TH, 1873.

It is proposed to observe the day in a fitting manner.

All former members of the Church, Parish, or Congregation, or Residents of the Town, who have removed from Holden, are cordially invited to return and unite with us in the exercises of that day.

At 2 o'clock, P. M., a Historical Address will be given by the Rev. Dr. Paine.

At 4:30, a Collation in the Hall.

At 7, a Social Re-union in the Church, with appropriate exercises.

If convenient, please be present with such friends as may be agreeable to yourself.

An extra train will leave for Worcester at the close of the evening exercises.

Per order of the Committee of Arrangements.

J. H. GLEASON, Secretary.

Holden, Oct. 8th, 1873.

Not a little effort was required to find the address of all these. Notices were inserted in the Daily and Weekly papers of Worcester, and arrangements made with the Boston, Barre & Gardner Railroad to run an extra train at the close of the services.

The day proved to be one of October's loviest, as if Providence smiled upon the undertaking At the hour appointed the arrangements were complete but the number in attendance was so large that nearly a half hour passed before the large old fashioned choir accompanied by an efficient orchestra were able to make themselves heard in the opening Anthem, "O pray for the peace of Jerusalem." The other exercises of the afternoon were as follows :

1st. Invocation by Rev. John Rounds, of the Baptist church in Holden.

2d. Hymn, "Ye tribes of Adam join."

3d. Reading of Scriptures and Prayer by Rev. Aldin Grout, of Springfield.

4th. Hymn, "Let children hear the mighty deeds."

5th. Historical discourse by Rev. Wm. P. Paine, D. D., pastor of the Congregational church in Holden for the past forty years.

6th. Hymn, "On the Mountain tops appearing."

7th. Prayer by Rev. Merrill Richardson, of Milford.

8th. Anthem, "O give thanks unto the Lord."

9th. Benediction by Dr. Paine.

DISCOURSE.

DEUT. VIII : 2. Thou shalt remember the way in which the Lord thy God led thee these Forty years.

The course which the occasion seems to require, is backward rather than forward. But retrogression does not usually open fields and vistas favorable to the awakening of the ideal and the play of fancy. The imagination is conjured into exercise by the future, rather than by the past. Historical facts generally gather around them little that is poetic. Retrospection is limited and specific if not tediously prosaic. Suppose a traveller, in a strange country, ascends some eminence overlooking both the way which he has already travelled and that over which he is yet to go: how different are his feelings according as he looks backward or forward! With a difference of emotion somewhat similar, but exceedingly intensified, was the forward look of forty years ago to a journey to be here prosecuted, and the backward glance of to-day at the same journey so far accomplished. I have tried a little to imagine how Joshua and Caleb, after completing the forty years pilgrimage in the wilderness, would have felt, if it had been arranged for them, with such as might be disposed to go with them, to retrace their steps, re-enter the wilderness and return to Egypt by the way they had come. I can readily believe that the task would have been undertaken with feelings vastly unlike those by which they were exercised in commencing their journey toward Canaan, greatly modified by experience and age, less bold and dashing, perhaps less hopeful and buoyant. I can think how at every stage of their backward

course, in their haltings and marchings, in prosperity and adversity, how tenderly there would be associated with localities and times and seasons all along the way, friends and acquaintances, strong men and children, wise counsellors, and men and women with willing and generous hearts, who were with them in the first journey, helping to bear burdens and to give cheer by kind offices and loving words, but now gone, not a visible sign of them remaining unless, perhaps, here and there some transitory monument of their names and deeds.

But we do not propose to return exactly in this manner over our forty years pilgrimage. In the first place let no one describe our course as a *wilderness* at all, of privation, discouragement and mutual complaint, certainly your pastoral leader is not now, and never has been in a mood to accept such a representation. There are other essential differences, our pilgrimage is not yet completed. We are turning back while yet on our journey together, and are retracing in an hour the steps which we have been forty years in taking. What a marvel is memory, passing with such surprising alertness over scores of years of pastoral history, and yet with so much particularity and precision! What an agent to gather up in a moment of time materials scattered over a long life both, perhaps, commendatory and accusing. Those years of our past lives, which are gone in the reckoning of time, are and ever will be present to memory and in full view.

When one from a pastor's stand-point looks back over any considerable period of parochial history, names, impressions and affecting reminiscences must constitute, while thus employed, a very essential part of his experience. But a very few with whom I commenced this forty years' journey are with us to-day. But where are they whom we miss. In retracing the course we find them here and there along the way and they become a great company. I remember them vividly and lovingly. I remember the very places where they stopped by the way, because they had not strength to accompany us farther. The view on every side stirs up memories which are vivid and tender, yet not all are occasions of sadness nor all of cheer. In the varied discipline

of life, whether we are going foward in exultant anticipations, or backward in more chastened retrospection, the result should be personal culture and spiritual improvement. When old acquaintances meeting together, whether casually or by design, proceed, as they surely will and with little delay, to talk of the past, they do not aim at much system in their rehearsals and reminiscences. I shall be quite likely to pursue a somewhat similar course at the present time, and I shall be obliged to travel on this memorable journey, with a speed characteristic of the present age. Even steam will hardly suffice. I should be glad to be able to bring into use some electrical scintillations to subserve the occasion.

To appreciate the condition of the church and society at the time of my settlement, as affecting both people and minister, it is necessary to understand some things relating to their previous condition. A history of this society from its beginning for more than three-fourths of a century is essentially the history of the town, its business being done under town warrants and by town officers. There was no more concern nor difficulty in raising money for ecclesiastical and religious expenses, than for schools or highways. But when the people of the commonwealth came to divide into denominations, a new order of things became necessary, and parishes were formed into distinct legal organizations. Many societies however, and ours among them, continued to raise the money they required as towns do, by tax upon individual valuation. This was the manner of conducting our financial affairs for many years after my settlement. Under this rule ample funds to meet appropriations were always to be found in the treasury, and the minister's salary was invariably ready on a specified day. Individual taxes were comparatively light, little more than nominal. One might be disposed to ask why so easy a course of raising parish funds was not continued. The brief answer is that there were too many who were unwilling to stand in their lot, even though the burden was so light. One after another withdrew his shoulder until the pressure was so great that it could not be endured by the few who were left. Then the

course of voluntary contribution was adopted, which is attended with more trouble and uncertainty, but with less disaffection.

I was settled here in a *storm*,—not indeed of natural elements for the day was clear, bland and delightful,—but of *moral*, or perhaps it may better be said of *reformatory* elements. When the vessel in which we had embarked together, had fairly sailed out of port, I cannot say that I did not, as I observed the threatening and even angry skies, indulge in some regrets that I had not remained on land a while longer and then taken passage in some other ship. But I found the storm less severe, and sooner calmed, and the voyage less tempestuous than I then feared. *Temperance* was the chief occasion of the fretting and upheaving of the sea. No material injury however has been produced by the agitation of the waters which was then, and which has since been caused by purifying winds and even tempests; while a multitude have been essentially benefitted and saved to virtue and prosperity.

From the present relation of ministers to temperance interests, it is not easy to understand to what jealousies and difficulties an advocacy of the cause rendered them liable forty years since. Ministers were not then, to the extent which they now are, sustained by those only who were favorably disposed to the temperance cause. There were then many good and true men who were not prepared for either personal abstinence, or for such public presentations of the subject as the more advanced and ardent friends of the cause deemed as proper and as positively required. After preaching here six Sabbaths, beginning January 1833, as I was about leaving the place, a member of the church called upon me, and after some complimentary remarks, said that he was "in favor of inviting me to settle here, provided I was right on the temperance question." I replied that I trusted I was about right, that in my own habits I was strictly a temperance man, that I regarded it a very important interest, and desired to do all I consistently could to promote the reformation. Then said he "if you settle here shall you preach upon it?" I answered that I had not yet marked out a distinct line of topics

for pulpit exercises, but thought I should probably preach on this subject, for I could then see numerous reasons for it and none against it. "Shall you," he continued, "say as some ministers do that he who drinks a little is worse than a drunkard?" I told him that I should not be likely to express myself in just those terms, but might say that I could conceive of cases in which the moderate drinker might exert a more extended and injurious influence on the cause than a dozen drunkards could. The man did not appear entirely satisfied. I never knew whether he voted for or against my settlement, but he seemed friendly to me and attended church with a good measure of regularity during his life. This individual instance represented not a small class of this religious society in the early period of my ministry. Temperance and slavery were rocks on which a multitude of pastorates were completely wrecked. Those were days of heated discussions and unhappy jealousies between members of some communions and not unfrequently between pastor and people. We have fortunately gone on our way thus far between Scylla and Charybdis without being swallowed by the one or devoured by the other. One of the great occasions of tumult and divisions has been, most remarkably, removed out of the way. Let God be thanked that there is no longer slavery in our land. While the other great evil still remains in formidable proportions, it is a happy circumstance that the virtuous and the friends of good order are almost a unit in desire and effort to remove it from the land. So that if ministers are now "all right" on temperance, they will not be likely to be seriously opposed so far as this interest is concerned, by those who do much to sustain religious institutions or who care much for the services of christian ministers, except at funerals and weddings.

It is worthy of special and grateful notice, when pastor and people remain together long enough to carry an important moral reformation so far along its course as to combine, to a very large extent, the religious element and moral worth of a community, actively in its favor. Our union, thus begun and continued, has not been distinguished by many remarkable incidents. They

have generally been such as it might be expected would attend the progress of revolving years.

It is always delicate, if not dangerous, for one to say much of himself, or of his own works, and when there is no special occasion for it, the less said the better. Yet in giving the most hasty and superficial account of a forty years' ministry, one could hardly avoid making personal reference to a greater degree than one of sensitive appreciation would desire. I am sure you will permit me to say that, however unfaithfully I have served you, I have to a large extent given you my *presence* and *time*. I have probably been absent too little for either my own good or yours. It has not generally been my practice to take my stipulated vacations. I have not often been away on pleasure excursions and never in search of other places to settle. It has been in my mind and heart to do much more and better for you than I have done. The imperfections have resulted sometimes from lack of wisdom, sometimes from want of health, and too often alas! for lack of a due measure of consecration of spirit to Christ's work.

The present pastorate has embraced a period more difficult than any preceeding one in New England's history, to keep in vigorous and progressive operation religious institutions in country towns. Forty years ago rail-roading was in its infancy, and had done little to develop and stimulate business. There were not many centers of trade and industry, or of population, except in a few cities on the sea-board. Agriculture was the chief employment in rural districts; and having little Western competition, was profitable and generally satisfactory. There being little to invite young men and women to leave the localities of their nativity, they remained at or near their early homes. Seldom did the precious old homestead go out of the family, but descended from father to son for generations, and besides, those were days of larger families than are now usually found in our native American homes. The result of this state of things was a country population in almost every place, at least holding its own and in most localities increasing. And the men and women

of those days were of strong and sterling character, with the religious element largely developed, who cheerfully sustained, by their contributions, influence and presence, the institutions of the church, providing also funds for schools which were attended by a large number of sturdy scholars who were taught to obey rules and to conduct themselves with propriety. Such essentially was the state of things in this place at the commencement of my pastorate. There was not then a foreigner in the town, and nearly the entire population of suitable age and condition, attended public worship somewhere and rendered pecuniary assistance in sustaining the same. Probably there are not now more than twenty-five dwelling houses (certainly less than thirty) in the entire town, occupied by those, or their descendants, who inhabited them at the time of my settlement. The family name has gone from them, and not a few have changed ownership many times. This is a marvellous change compared with preceding periods of the same length. It would doubtless more nearly accord with the facts, to reverse the ratio, and say that less than thirty dwellings, during any preceding forty years, went out of the family and lost the family name. It may also be mentioned, as indicative of the great changes which a series of years may produce in a community, that not more than eight or nine couples, sustaining the relation of husband and wife, who resided in Holden at the time of my settlement are now here with the union undissolved by death. But let it by no means be understood that all changes, which have occurred, should be put to the account of *loss*. Many of them have materially swelled the column of *gain*. This is doubtless true to a greater extent here than in many places where the percentage of change has been the same as ours. But mutability like this, in parochial affairs, cannot but render all religious interests comparatively uncertain and unsystematic, being the occasion of anxious watching and careful planning, and not unfrequently laying heavy burdens upon the ready and willing. I wish here to bear witness that during my ministry, and to this day there have been a goodly number of men and women, both older and younger, who

have evinced a highly commendable degree of interest in sustaining the institutions of religion in this community, and in making generous and cheerful provision for the wants and comfort of the pastor.

The chain of evergreen, bearing a *cross* so ingeniously devised, and executed so artistically, which I see suspended gracefully over my head, consists of forty links. The design is to represent forty years of *cross-bearing*. It would doubtless be a fitting symbol of the life of some ministers of the gospel; but it surely is not of mine. I have not been a cross-bearer in my pastoral relations, and if there be a fault in this regard, it must be yours rather than mine. From the beginning of my ministry you have denied me the right, if it be a right, and the privilege, if it be a privilege, of reaping the fruits of the discipline of a cross-bearing service in the vineyard of the master. I have no harsh nor unkind treatment of myself nor of my family, no neglect, no grievances of any kind, to charge upon the people either as a church, society or individuals; none to remember for none exist, and none ever have had existence during this protracted relation. One sustaining the pastoral office could not ask for, nor desire more kind and considerate treatment than I have uniformly received from you and those who preceded you. And I desire both as an act of justice, and as a great pleasure to bear public testimony that I have very often received precious and generous and substantial tokens of sympathy and friendship from those who had once been respected parishoners but had left us for other places of abode. Their highly appreciated expressions of good-will have been both individual and combined. I desire that every such friend and and donor will accept my most cordial thanks. I can hardly restrain myself just here, from rehearsing names of men and women, in town and out, living and dead, who have rendered very efficient service to the society, and church and pastor during these many years. But the catalogue would be too long. They are not forgotten, their works do follow them, and they are held in respectful and tender remembrance. May the rich blessings of God ever rest upon them! Let me here, in behalf of this

religious Society extend a cordial welcome and fervent salutations to the many old acquaintances and beloved friends who, having gone from us are honoring and cheering us by their presence on this memorial occasion. We are delighted to see the familiar countenances of you all, and to hear the voices of some of you in song, as of old.

The period under review is not more remarkable for fluctuation in local and limited interests than for essential changes and progress in whatever concerns the condition of all peoples of all lands. Time on the present occasion, would fail to note in the fewest possible words, even the headings, without a syllable of comment, of the distinguishing events and discourses and application of forces which have marked these years. But developments in the uses of steam and electricity, in mechanism, in arts and sciences have no more than kept pace with the *moral* movements of the period of which we speak. It has not been distinguished above other periods for blood and carnage among the nations, nor for national revolutions. The division lines of Empires and States to a great extent remain as they were, half a century ago. But a large portion of the people have experienced great changes in governmental, social and moral condition. Such changes as have never been wrought on so large a scale in an equal number of years since the world began. And there is no diminution, but a constant increase in the moral forces which are at work. The grand revolution which marks this age and especially the very days now passing, is one of ideas, of civil rights and moral obligations, of the true relations of men to each other, of neighbor to neighbor, of nation to nation, of people to government, of subjects to rulers and of all to God. If darkness still exists, light is everywhere breaking in. If there is yet profound ignorance, knowledge is becoming widely spread. Though there is yet a great lack of instructors, many are running to and fro.

These revolving years so rapidly coming and going are not passing by without leaving their mark. Many of the results are most cheering and glorious. Living at a period when there is

such an onward movement, and such inspiring developments even in a short life, in a single pastorate, who can be an idle observer of the world's condition and progress? Who can doubt whether there is a call for personal service with a promise of success? One cannot be so blind in these stirring days as not to know that "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." These years are not as an idle tale, they teach rich and impressive lessons, even while on the wing. They are freighted with truth and promise; each at its departing, pointing to its various developments relating to the prosperity of the kingdom of righteousness, utters these assuring words, "In the *incoming* years ye shall see *greater* things than these."

But amid remarkable changes, some of our parochial interests have been as wonderfully stable. One relates to our houses of worship. In 1736 a vote was passed by the proprietors of the *precinct*, (it was before the incorporation of the town), "to erect a meeting-house fifty feet long, forty feet wide and twenty two feet between joints." The site of the house was near where Mr. Isaac Damon's house now stands. Such a sanctuary would now make a very rude appearance, but was quite reputable as viewed in connection with the habits and demands of those days. In about fifty years, that house having become somewhat dilapidated, the question was discussed in a Town meeting held Dec. 10th, 1787 whether the old meeting-house should be repaired or a new one built. The prevalent opinion was that there should be a new one, which was carried into effect during the year 1789. The house in which we are now assembled is the one which was then built, now eighty-four years old. In 1828 it was extensively remodeled. It originally stood about midway from its present site to the highway in front. The roof was turned a quarter round, a vestibule and dome were added and the interior entirely changed. It now becomes an important question whether something should not again be done by way of repairing and remodeling. I am glad to know that there are many who think there should be, and speedily. If it should be said that the expense could not be afforded, I should feel like saying that

the society cannot afford not to do it. Vestry-room is a very urgent want in relation to the prosperity of a religious society. The best good of a church, society and Sunday school requires a home of its own as well as does a household.

The pastorate has been almost as stable as the meeting-houses. The first settled minister of this society was Rev. Joseph Davis who was ordained Dec. 22, 1742, the same day on which the church was constituted and by the same council that officiated in its formation. The church thus organized consisted of fourteen members, and, what is somewhat singular, all were males. But it cannot be supposed that there were no good and devout women in the place at that time Surely their labors have been abundant and useful in every period of the church's history. Nearly every project, whether social or religious is both *lame* and *tame* without their co-operation. Mr. Davis held the pastoral office about thirty years, till January 1773. The church was then without a pastor (and for the only time during its entire history of more than one hundred and thirty years) till Dec. 21st, 1774, a little less than two years, when Rev. Joseph Avery was ordained and installed. He held the office of *sole* pastor till Oct. 22d, 1823, and that of senior pastor until his death March 5th, 1824, having arrived at the age of seventy-two years. Rev. Horatio Bardwell was installed junior pastor Oct. 22d, 1823, and was dismissed on the day of the present pastor's ordination, Oct. 24th, 1833. Making but four pastorates in one hundred and thirty-one years. But few churches can furnish a record of so great pastoral stability. The pastorate of the present incumbent has been of longer duration than of any other minister of our denomination in Massachusetts, now in service, who has no colleague, and not more than two or three who have helpers, have served one people so long. If I was to account for this protracted relation in the briefest manner, I should say that it was mainly because the people had refrained wholly from interfering with the pastor's duties, and that he had endeavored to keep himself within the bounds of his own appropriate business. And also as having a direct and essential bearing on this point it

should be said that there has invariably been practical and sympathetic harmony between the pastor and the choir, each cheerfully rendering to the other the possession of rights and the gratification of tastes. When railroads have two tracks they are so laid that trains shall not conflict with each other, though they both belong to the road and have equal rights in it. If either train jumps its own track there is apt to be serious trouble. When men sustain relations to each other, peace and prosperity will, to a great extent, be in the ratio of the amiable discretion they carry into practical life, and in no relation, is a just appreciation of mutual rights and a disposition to regard them, more essential to harmony and success than that between pastor and people.

There has been nothing in respect to mortality in the town during the period under review, specially peculiar. The whole number of deaths in the forty years, has been thirteen hundred and two. The largest number being in 1854 when there were forty-five and the smallest in 1841 when there were twenty-one. In the first twenty years there were six hundred and thirteen deaths in the town, and during the last twenty, six hundred and eighty-nine.

At the time of my settlement there were four Deacons of the church, Deacons Joshua Fairbanks, Peter Rice, John Lovell and Silas Flagg, all of whom being good and useful men, have passed away. Six have since been elected to the same office, Deacons Cyrus Perry, Silas M. Hubbard, Alonzo L. Ware, Newell Moore, Samuel B. Hubbard and John B. Moore, only the last two named still live. All those who acted on committees of both church and society in reference to my call and settlement are dead. With one exception, Rev. George Allen of Worcester, the clergymen who took a part in the exercises of my ordination are dead. But not only have officials of the church passed away, but of the four hundred and fifty members at the time of my settlement, not more than twenty-five are now with us. A few more still live, who have gone to reside in some other locality. During the years under review there have been received into the church four

hundred and sixty-two, very many of whom have already passed from earthly service. I have officiated at three hundred and forty-eight weddings. There is something in this latter record which illustrates that important changes are in progress in this place, in the *phase* of population. Dividing the forty years into decades, I married during the first ten years one hundred and twenty-three couples; the second ten, one hundred and three; the third ten, fifty-five, and the fourth ten, sixty-seven. The first ten years I married more than during the last twenty. This difference is largely due to a change in population, in respect to both age and nationality.

I have attended more than a thousand funerals, which have taken me to a large portion of the dwellings of this town. In running my thoughts over the place I indeed find scarcely any, except a few more recently erected, to which I have not been called on this sad errand, and to many over and over again.

I have preached about four thousand sermons, and have spent with you more than five years and a half of time in Sabbaths. I have administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper about two hundred and forty times. While I had strength to devote much time and labor to interests outside of pastoral works, I regarded it both a duty and privilege to afford direct aid in the promotion of the prosperity of our schools, both common and select. I served as chairman of the school committee thirty-four years, and derived much satisfaction from the exercises of the school-room, and the intimate acquaintance I formed and kept up with the successive classes of scholars. There are not now nearly so many who attend our schools as there were forty years ago, and so on for twenty or thirty years after my settlement. In several districts the present number is not half so large as in those days, and moreover pupils then continued their connection with schools to a later and more mature period of life than is customary now, which it seems to me was very essentially to their advantage.

There have been during these forty years, ten distinct and precious seasons of special religious interest among us. First

in the Spring of 1834, the second in the Autumn of 1836, the third in the Winter of 1838, the fourth in the Winter of 1841, the fifth in the Winter and Spring of 1843, the sixth in the Spring of 1850, the seventh in the Spring of 1851, the eighth in the Winter and Spring of 1856, the ninth in 1857-8 and the tenth in 1869. A very large proportion, indeed nearly all who have united with the church during my pastorate were the fruits of these revivals. The church has not been altogether unproductive in some *special* fruits. At least eleven of her sons have received a college education during this period, and several others previously. At least seven have become ministers of the gospel and seven young women have married ministers within this time. Since the commencement of the enterprise of Foreign Missions two from this church have gone on missions to Turkey, two to Africa, three to the Sandwich Islands, two to the Indians of our own country and two to labor for the Freedmen. Of this number all, with two exceptions, have gone from us during my pastorate. Few country churches or indeed city churches can furnish a record of numbers for such service equal to this.

For the first thirty years of my ministry my wife and myself spent very agreeably and I trust profitably, much time in visiting the people from house to house. In this way we cultivated an intimate acquaintance with both the older and younger members of the congregation. We felt that at all events the children, and there were many of them, must be cared for and it was our endeavor to do what we could publicly and privately, for their instruction and well-being, not neglecting to stimulate parents in regard to their duties. There have been few sources of more pleasure, than the expressions of grateful recognition of such labors which have from time to time, come to us from those who felt that they were helped by these influences in their earlier days. During the last decade I have not been able, in addition to my public labors, to do so much pastoral work; some of the time indeed very little. I feel strongly inclined to the performance of this kind of service to the full extent that I have strength to do, for it is in a high degree useful, and also an employment very far from being to me disagreeable or irksome.

During this long series of years, many of you have been deeply afflicted in the progress of providential events. "The gold has often become dim and the most fine gold changed." The lights of many of your dwellings have been put out and you have been made to watch and weep in deep shadows. Pleasing hope has been cut off, joy has been turned into sadness, and many a merry heart has been suddenly overwhelmed with lamentations and mourning. As silver cords have been loosed, and golden bowls broken, you have painfully learned and deeply felt that all beneath the skies is fading and transitory. To such experiences your pastor has been no stranger. When I came here I had never lost a friend by death, which had caused me one pang of real grief. I cannot say so now. There have been eight members of my family: only three of us remain. In memorial sermons which I have preached on former occasions, some reference was made to such members of my family as God had then taken to himself. Since then another has been called up higher. Though I shrink from uttering one word on this occasion concerning her, I cannot but feel that to pass the event in entire silence would be doing a wrong both to a precious memory and to you. She who was my friend was your friend also. She loved you, and it was her delight to help you. When she came to labor amid these scenes she most cheerfully left a condition which, in a worldly aspect, would seem highly attractive to one seeking only ease and pleasure. Her service for Christ and for you was vastly more satisfactory to her than would have been a position of less responsibility and of more affluence, independence and display. She had an ardent attachment to whatever related to Christ and his kingdom, and was fervently devoted to that which pertained to the interests, temporal and spiritual of her fellow beings, and most especially of yourselves. I will not enlarge upon her qualities of mind and heart which gave her a place so large and essential in the family circle, and rendered her such a priceless wife and mother. I make this brief utterence the more freely because I know that my words are being heard by those who knew her well, and knew her best.

Coming here as I did in early life, directly from the schools, where I had been immured the chief of my days, entirely inexperienced in every thing relating to pastoral responsibilities, the present painfully strange, and the future anxiously doubtful, if I had then been asked to imagine some event of all possible ones the least likely to occur in my history, I might have replied, to remain in Holden to preach a fortieth anniversary discourse. Such are the expectations of men and such the ways of God. But where is the great congregation then present to look upon the young minister and he upon them? Here one, and there one, and that is all. Church officers all gone. Superintendents of the Sunday school, one after another passed away; of the teachers and scholars, very few remaining. The large choir that filled the orchestra to the brim and more, all gone,—no not *all*. There was then a *wee one* who had just taken her place in the choir, and by standing on the tips of her toes, and making an extra effort to elongate her stature, could just be seen above the orchestra's breastwork. But she was not long shut out of either eye or ear, and during all these years, with most remarkable constancy she has put in an appearance Sabbath after Sabbath, and whenever and wherever else her presence has been required, and continues to this day to render invaluable aid in the service of song.

With his mind crowded with such memories should you not think that the pastor might feel almost alone to-day? Well, he both does and does not, and does *not* more than he does. Many warm friends rallied around him in his early ministerial life, whom imperious Time has taken from him, till now those early and true ones are nearly gone; but others have taken their places who are just as sympathetic and precious. There were those in former days, who loved the interests of Zion, and were fervent friends of the watchman who stood upon her walls, and now also the pastor finds himself encompassed by kindred spirits. As those gone before have fallen, the ranks have closed up and the pastor, to this day, has never been left without a faithful and trusty *body-guard*.

In giving this narration of facts, having been necessarily led to say so much concerning depressing change and attending evils, I ought in justice to our present state to say more and express what is my firm conviction, that the darkest days in regard to this society's prosperity are already passed and that the present is highly encouraging. There are with us both harmony and strength. There is mental and pecuniary ability. There is a sensitive appreciation of good order and of religious ordinances. There is zeal for truth and for God, and when aroused there is a willingness to work, which, I have no doubt will insure ways and means such as the well-being of the church and society requires. The preparation for this memorial occasion is an illustration of this. The prosperity of the town, in my view, will gradually improve rather than farther wane, and the religious organizations of the place will be materially benefitted thereby.

In retracing this memorial way, over which we have walked together these steadily coming and going years, away back to the time and place of the beginning of my pastoral cares, I seem for the moment to be standing *now* as I stood *then*, to be looking upon faces and listening to voices, as they were then seen and heard, and to feel as I then felt. Every thing was so strange as to produce something like a blinding giddiness *then*, and the *present* seems as if it could hardly be a reality. One can better bear, without tender and startling emotion, a look upon the way over which he has come, when the review is only cursory, than when it is more statistically exact. The surface of history is one thing, its vital realities are quite another; and though one who has nearly run his race, the divers items of which have already been collected into recorded annals, *may* in memory run back to the beginning and *seem* for a little moment to be there again, it is *only* for a moment. He soon comes to see and feel that the starting place away back in the past, once so hopeful perhaps, but more likely, so painfully uncertain, is not in reality his present place of standing. It is as a dream where one awaketh, and one impressively feels that he is actually near the

end rather than at the beginning of his career. O no! This year is not 1833, but 1873, and we are now really *here* and not away back in the distant and shadowy past.

Going backward whether it gives pleasure or pain, is a work to be done only by *memory*; but *faithful service* and solemn *destiny* are concerned in that which is yet to come. Memory has serious official duties to discharge for either one's weal or woe; but for amends and improvement and fidelity to trust the present and future *only* are ours. Life is short, over which memory may either weep or revel; but eternity is long for both the plaudits of commendation and the stinging reproaches of a guilty conscience. In our review we have been gathering up items not so much of detached individual relations and interests, as pertaining to a grand divine *institution* for the amelioration of the ills of life and the moral and spiritual restoration of man. The church has a noble work commended to its charge, and when minister and people work kindly and harmoniously together as we, I repeat it emphatically, as we have ever done without one exception, these forty years, and in addition are duly consecrated to Christ and faithful to God and man, the kingdom of righteousness must increase and flourish, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against it.

EXERCISES.

The occasion called together a large number of the sons and daughters of the town from abroad, who improved the opportunity for the renewal of old associations.

The house was crowed to its utmost capacity both on the floor and in the galleries. The audience room was most beautifully decorated with festoons of evergreen decked with autumn leaves and bouquets. On the walls back of the pulpit were the words "Welcome home." Also the figures 1833 and 1873 connected by an evergreen chain containing forty links, supporting a beautiful cross, as an emblem of the length and character of Dr. Paine's services in this place.

A collation had been prepared in the Town Hall for five hundred persons and although fully that number were fed, there were more than "twelve baskets of fragments left."

Three hours intervened between the afternoon and evening exercises. Yet the time was much too short for the warm hand shakings and hearty greetings which were engaged in by all.

The design of the committee was to make the evening exercises more joyous and mirthful than those of the afternoon.

One of the most wide awake of the sons of Holden was selected to set the ball in motion. It was soon evident however that this part of the programme could not be carried out in the manner intended. Every body seemed extremely happy, but no one was in a mood for witty sayings or playful remarks. No one seemed to regret the change however for it was in unison with the feelings of all. The exercises were in the church commencing at half past seven o'clock. Charles Flagg acted as President of the evening and Ethan Davis as Toastmaster.

The members of the Baptist and Congregational choirs and a large number of singers of former days took their places in "the Singers Seats," to the number of nearly 100. An old fashioned orchestra with the identical double bass viol played in the same place nearly forty years ago gave effective assistance. J. H. Gleason the leader of the Congrega-

tional choir had charge of the musical entertainment during the day and evening. The rendering of the old tunes called forth many kind and pleasant remarks complimentary to those taking part in the performance.

After an Anthem the Rev. Cyrus M. Perry of Southwick led in Prayer.

The Sentiments were as follows :

1st. The occasion we celebrate : may its effect be as salutary in the future as this gathering is delightful in the present.

Response by Rev. Elnathan Davis, of Auburn.

2d. The native ministers of Holden : may they never fail to produce a pure and progressive theology.

Response by Rev. Merrill Richardson of Milford.

3d. The missionaries who have gone out from our homes : may their labors of love be as blessed to the heathen as their memories have been to their friends they left behind.

Response by Rev. Aldin Grout, of Springfield, a missionary in South Africa for thirty years. His present and former wife were natives of Holden.

4th. Our beloved Pastor : for forty years a leader of this people in the wilderness ; may he realize in their love and gratitude the Canaan of his hopes and the reward of his labors.

Rev. Dr. Paine made a feeling response in a few words full of genuine emotion.

The following original hymn by Rev. Elnathan Davis was then sung:

HYMN.

O Father ! how the swift years glide,
  Their seasons come and go !
No ebb to their resistless tide,
  On—as of old they flow !

But yesterday, thy servant stood,
  Brown-locked among young men,
To-day among the brotherhood
  Of " three score years and ten."

Ah ! they who wrought beside him then.
  In manhood's later day,
Have faded from the ways of men !
  " The fathers, where are they ?"

And where the youth, who warm of hand,
Gave greeting full and free ?
A toil worn, gray and broken band,
Make answer, " Here are we."

Yet not in barrenness and loss,
Have passed these years away,
For love grows warmer by the cross,
Life, brighter in decay.

And happier thou at evening time,
Thy toil, fruit-crowned to-day,
Than, brother, where in manhood's prime
Our hearts first owned thy sway.

And though *the* light of thy young life,
With other lights, is gone,
In joy beyond earth's pain and strife,
They shine forever on !

O Saviour, in the world above,
All passed, our sin, our fear,
Re-knit in bonds of changeless love,
The old ties sundered here.

5th. The Congregational Church of Holden. The home of good and true children.

Response by Rev. Cyrus M. Perry, of Southwick.

6th. The gentleman who first brought our pastor to our homes. Then a stage driver, afterwards a member of Congress, now crowned with still higher honors as president of the Boston, Barre & Gardner Railroad.

Hon. Ginery Twichell was expected to respond but was unable to be present.

7th. Woman : though strangely ignored in the formation of this church, yet in every stage of its progress cheerfully and vigorously ready for every good word and work.

Response by Chas. W. Gleason, of Natick.

8th. The adopted sons of Holden : all respected and beloved. Some elevated to high places of honor and trust in State and nation. They all unite to-day in paying honor to the home of their adoption.

Response by Hon. Jason Goulding, of Phillipston.

9th. Our Chorister of to-day : for many years leader of the service of song in this house. May he long stand upon the BASE he now occupies.

The response to this sentiment by J. H. Gleason called up Dr. Paine who corroborated the allusions to the pleasant relations which had always existed between the Pastor and the Choir.

10th. The young ladies and gentlemen of Holden : their taste and labor in the decorations and duties of this occasion are but a type of their ability and readiness for all the works of life.

Response by Arthur R. Paine, son of the Pastor.

11th. Holden, formerly Worcester North, when she becomes a great city like Worcester, may she have as good a Mayor.

Response by Mayor Jillson, of Worcester.

12th. Our Friends from abroad always welcome to our homes.

John Boyden of Worcester was called upon to respond to this sentiment, which he did in a pleasing manner, and closed by moving, (seconded by W. E. Minturn,) the raising of a contribution by visiting friends to be presented to Dr. Paine as a token of their kind regard. This motion was carried and the sum of $116.00, was received, nearly one half of which was generously contributed by our former townsman, Edward Kendall, Esq., now of Cambridge, Mass., who also responded in a few well chosen remarks. The president of the evening expressed his own thanks and gratification for this voluntary expression of the friends of Dr. Paine, who had previously left for home.

Rev. Elnathan Davis was then called on for a poem as the closing exercise.

POEM :

Read by request, at the close of the reunion service in the evening, by Elnathan Davis.

Zealous, and strong for his life-long work—
Bearing the precious seed to sow—
Our brother trod
These hills of God,
Just forty years ago.

No vision of wealth to his keen eye came,
Or song of renown to his ear ;
But his chosen part
Was to touch the heart
Of the scattered dwellers here ; —

To reach, and stir to their inmost depths,
The souls whom he came to bless :—
To lead the flock
To thy shadowing rock,
O Lord—our righteousness !

And here, with his hand to the Master's plow,
He has toiled from his manhood's prime —
Till the low-lying sun
Speaks of life's work done,
And of "rest at the evening time."

We breathe our prayer for thy servant, Lord !
His treasure below, be thy love ;—
All unshaken his trust
Till the flesh fades to dust,
And the soul springs to Mansions above.

And on all, who from different fields of toil,
Come to share in these scenes to-day ;
Mid the joys and fears
Of the flying years—
Be the blessing of God, we pray !—

The infinite blessing "that maketh rich,
And addeth no sorrow thereto"—
O, the blossoms of love !—
Let them fall from above,
All the paths of the future to strew !

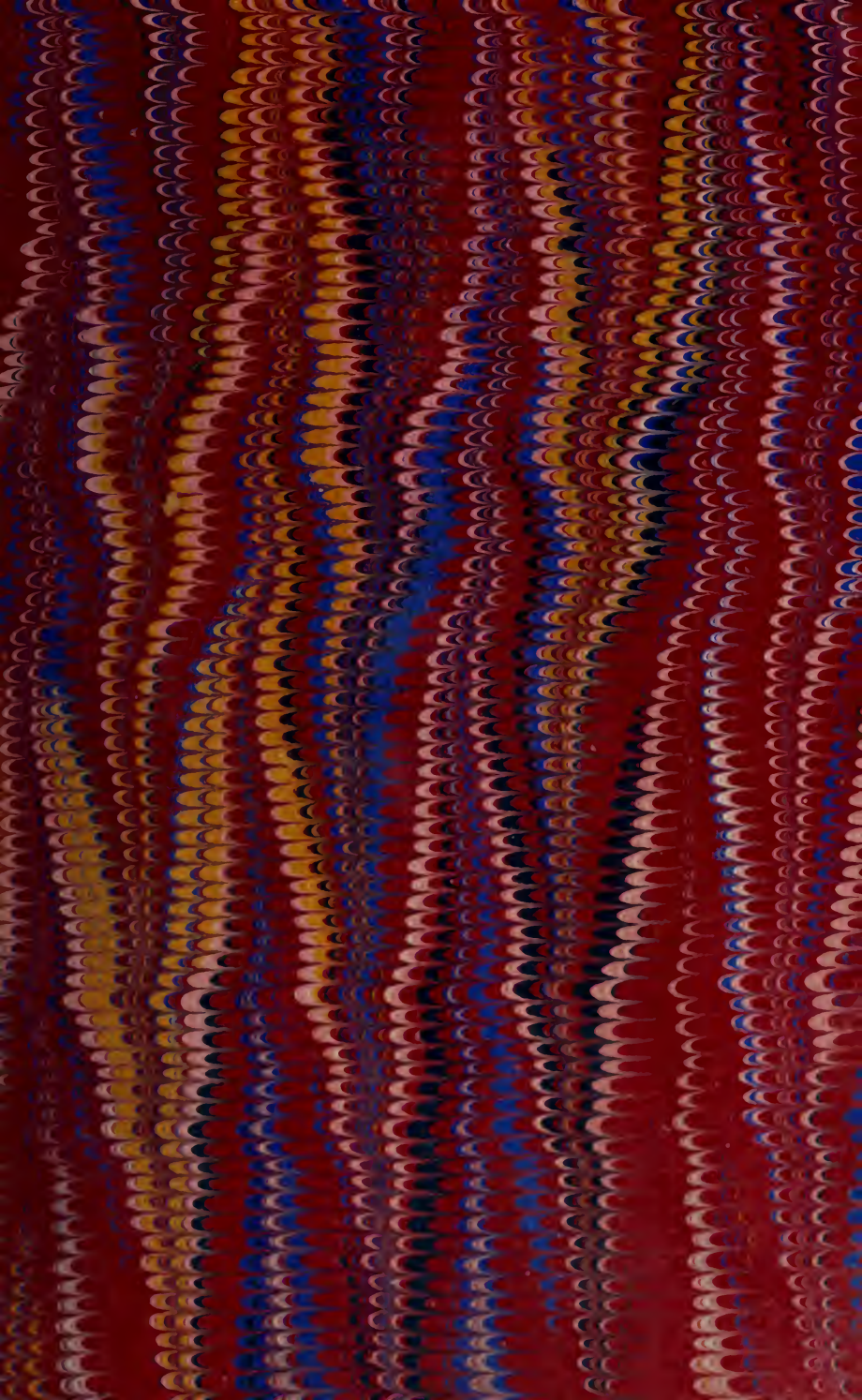
Now, encircled around the old altar of home,
So we purpose—age, manhood, and youth—
That, in pleasure or pain,
The years that remain
Shall be given to God, and His truth !

O Thou, who dost lead thy redeemed, as a flock,
To the hills of refreshment and rest—
To fountains that burst
For the pilgrims who thirst,
On their march to the home of the blest—

Be our guide in the weakness and dimness of earth,
Till its dimness and weakness are o'er,
And our weary feet stand
In the beautiful land,
With the loved who have passed on before !

On motion of D. F. Parker, of Worcester, a vote of thanks was given by the visitors, to the citizens of Holden, for their sumptuous entertainment. At a late hour the exercises were brought to a close and a large majority of our visiting friends took the cars for home. Thus ended one of the most interesting occasions that has ever occurred in this town. Many visited their old home for the last time ; friends met who had not met for many years and may never meet again. The remembrance of this day will not soon pass away.

Letters were received from Rev. Mr. Marvin, of Lancaster, Rev. G. L. Gleason, of Manchester, Mass., John E. Chaffin, of Detroit, Mich., C. M. Wilson, of Chicago, Ill., and others, all expressing their regrets that they could not be present, and their high regard and respect for our venerable Pastor, Dr. Paine.



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